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PATRICK HENRY AND THE SIREN

In his famous "Give me liberty or give me death" speech Patrick Henry said: "We are apt to shut our eyes against a painful truth, and listen to the sound of that siren until she transforms us into beasts." It is most unlikely that it has not been previously noted that the eloquent patriot had confused the siren with Circe, since the song of the sirens lured men to destruction, while it was the spell or the potions of Circe which transformed them into beasts, but I have gone over several editions of his orations without finding any reference to this confusion.

JOHN A. SCOTT

MORE HOMERIC REMINISCENCES

In the CLASSICAL JOURNAL for January, 1921 (XVI, pp. 243 ff.), in the department of Notes, Professor Winter has a very interesting article on Homeric Reminiscences. The following is parallel from the United States Navy. I have the story from one of our students who served in the navy during the late war; he tells it this way: "The gobs in the navy get homesick occasionally, and one fellow said after he had received a letter from home, 'When I get out of this navy I'm going to start inland and carry an anchor with me. And when I get so far inland that they don't know what an anchor is I'm going to drop it and stay there for the rest of my life.'"

The form and feeling are strikingly like the English examples given by Professor Winter. Has the British Navy passed on a Homeric tradition to the American Navy? It would be worth while to find other modern examples of the survival of the idea.

In connection with the passages from the Odyssey, I should like to call attention to the two fragments of Sophocles (415 and 416, Nauck),* from the Odysseus Acanthoplex, where Sophocles evidently made use of the Homeric idea and even of Homer's words. This was probably quite as effective in the drama as in the epic.

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*Fragment 415. *ποδαπὸν τὸ δῶρον ἀμφὶ φαιδίμοις ἔχων ὦμοις;*

Fragment 416. *ὦμοις ἀθηρόβρωτον ὄργανον φέρων.*